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FATHER AND SON GET SPYING TERMS

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BALTIMORE, Nov. 6 — John A. Walker Jr., who confessed he ran one of the most damaging spy rings in American history, was sentenced today to life in prison, with a Federal judge recommending that he never be paroled.

The judge, Alexander Harvey 2d, said in Federal District Court that he felt "contempt and disgust" for Mr. Walker, who recruited his brother, son and best friend into a spy ring that allowed the Soviet Union to decode more than one million secret Navy messages.

Under a plea agreement worked out last year, Judge Harvey sentenced Mr. Walker's son, Michael L. Walker, to 25 years in prison. Judge Harvey said he would recommend that Michael Walker also serve his sentence without parole.

A judge's recommendations to the United States Parole Commission are influential but not binding.

'Everything in My Power'

"You do not seem to appreciate the enormity of these crimes," said Judge Harvey, speaking of the possibility of parole. "I shall do everything in my power to see this does not occur."

Addressing the elder Mr. Walker, 49 years old, a retired Navy warrant officer, Judge Harvey noted that other spies in history were motivated by ideology.

"Your motive was pure greed, and you were paid handsomely for your traitorous acts," said Judge Harvey. "I look in vain for some redeeming aspect of your character."

Mr. Walker did not speak to the court, as convicted defendants are permitted to do before sentencing, and he showed no emotion as the judge said he would try to block any parole.

Ex-Wife and Daughters in Court

Barbara Walker, John Walker's former wife, whose tip to Federal agents led to the investigation that uncovered the spying ring, rushed to the front of the courtroom after the proceeding with tears in her eyes.

Mr. Walker and his son had already been lead away. In the audience, Mrs. Walker had sat with two of her daughters, Laura Walker Snyder and Cynthia Walker. A third daughter, Margaret Walker, sat on the other side of the room, looking straight ahead.

Mr. Walker will be eligible for parole in 10 years and Michael, 23, will be eligible in eight and a third years. The son

was a seaman aboard the aircraft carrier Nimitz.

The Government has said that the espionage ring allowed the Soviet Union to read secret communications from the time of the Vietnam War until the early 1980's. This caused a wide variety of potential damage, revealing Navy tactics, Government covert operations and command procedures for using and deploying nuclear weapons, according to an affidavit filed in the case by Adm. William O. Studeman, director of naval intelligence.

The Government said John Walker received about \$1 million from the Soviet Union for his spying activities.

Under an agreement worked out last year, Mr. Walker pleaded guilty to two counts of espionage in exchange for the 25-year sentence for his son, who could have been sentenced to life.

Mr. Walker also agreed to cooperate with the authorities fully in helping with the assessment of damage caused by the spy ring and in testifying against his friend, Jerry A. Whitworth, 47, a retired Navy petty officer who had been

arrested in California.

Mr. Walker's testimony against Mr. Whitworth helped lead to his conviction on espionage charges. He was sentenced to 365 years in prison and fined \$410,000 for his role in the spy ring.

Mr. Walker has failed parts of several polygraph, or lie-detector, tests, about key aspects of his spying activities, according to a presentencing memorandum filed by the prosecutors. Among the questions on which the memorandum said there was deception was the starting date for Mr. Walker's spying and the extent of involvement by his brother, Arthur J. Walker, 51, a retired Navy lieutenant commander who was convicted of espionage. He was sentenced to life in prison.

Robert McDonald, an assistant United States Attorney, acknowledged that the Government had some reservations about Mr. Walker but said he was deemed to be "truthful" on the key issues under investigation.

Remorse Reported Lacking

Mr. Walker's attorney, Fred Warren Bennett, said his client had asked him to express remorse to the court for his crimes. Mr. Bennett said in an interview that Mr. Walker drafted a statement before concluding that nothing he could say would have any credibility.

Robert Hunter, the agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from Norfolk, Va., who spent dozens of hours pursuing and then interviewing Mr. Walker, said he had seen no evidence of regret.

"I never got any indication of remorse whatsoever," said Mr. Hunter. "I asked if he had any remorse. He basically said he's not the type of person who would tell me if he had remorse and he glibly asked me if I had asked that question so I could go home and tell my wife I had finally gotten John Walker to admit remorse. That doesn't sound like remorse to me."